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THE UTILITY OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE: A CINC'S PERSPECTIVE

by

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Major USMC

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of National Security Decision Making.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Tne utility of security assistance for a CINC of the 1990s is examined. As the size of the American military shrinks and fewer forces are stationed overseas, can a CINC use security assistance to accomplish his mission? A survey of the American Security Assistance program is conducted to determine the tools which a CINC has to use. The missions of a CINC are then addressed in order to provide a framework for evaluation. The capabilities and limitations of the Security Assistance program are addressed and analyzed to determine the factors which impact on the program's utility to a CINC. While security assistance has many benefits, its aims are often inconsistant and contradictory. The CINC plays a minor role in policy formulation and implementation. A CINC of the 1990s should not depend upon security assistance as a reliable means of accomplishing his mission.

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The utility of security assistance for a CINC of the 1990s is examined. As the size of the American military shrinks and fewer forces are stationed overseas, can a CINC use security assistance to accomplish his mission? A survey of the American Security Assistance program is conducted to determine the tools which a CINC has to use. The missions of a CINC are then addressed in order to provide a framework for evaluation. The capabilities and limitations of the Security Assistance program are addressed and analyzed to determine the factors which impact on the program's utility to a CINC. While security assistance has many benefits, its aims are often inconsistant and contradictory. The CINC plays a minor role in policy formulation and implementation. A CINC of the 1990s should not depend upon security assistance as a reliable means of accomplishing his mission.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Commanders of Unified Commands (CINCS) will face unique challenges in the 1990s and into the next century. America's shrinking global presence and reductions in forward deployed units will force CINCs to search for new ways to accomplish their mission. Security Assistance has been an important part of American security strategy for the past 50 years. An increased reliance on security assistance is one possible way for a CINC to carry out his military mission. The question then becomes: as it is presently configured, is our security assistance program a useful tool for a CINC to use to accomplish his mission? By examining the nature of our security assistance program, the missions of a CINC, and the capabilities and limitations of the current program one can a determine the utility of security assistance to a CINC.

CHAPTER II.

THE AMERICAN SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

There are four facets to America's Security Assistance Program. These four are Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Foreign Military Financing (FMF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and the employment of Mobile Training Teams (MTTs). The scope of the FMS, FMF, and IMET programs are easily quantified and identified; MTTs are more difficult to assess.

Foreign Military Sales (FMS) is a program through which DOD sells weapons, military equipment, defense services and training to foreign governments. The FMS program operates under State Department guidance and often involves co-production and co-development agreements to share costs or transfer technology to the recipient country. FMS promotes interoperability with allied and friendly forces, reduces unit costs of military equipment for U.S. forces, helps maintain U.S. industrial base and contributes to U.S. efforts to maintain a global balance of trade. During FY 1990 the top 10 FMS purchasers were Saudi Arabia, Japan, Egypt, Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Israel, Germany and Spain.[1]

Foreign Military Financing (FMF) provides credits or grants for the purchase of U.S. weapons, defense equipment and services. The perceived benefits of FMF are similar to those of FMS although FMF usually does not involve co-development or co-production. For 1992, $4.15 billion in FMF funding has been

authorized by Congress.[2] The vast majority of FMF funds go to a handful of countries. Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Portugal and the Philippines accounted for 93% of FY 1991 FMF funds.[3] Most FMF funds are earmarked by Congress for use by specific countries. For instance, 86% of FY 1991 FMF funding was earmarked by Congressional action.[4]

The third facet of America's Security Assistance Program is the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. IMET is grant aid that provides military education and training in the United States to approximately 6,000 foreign military personnel annually. Rather than training people to handle specific equipment, the program's focus is on providing professional leadership and management training for upper and middle level military officers. IMET helps the U.S. influence thousands of individuals who rise to positions of power in their armed forces or government. The program also enhances the military effectiveness of participant nations, promoting self-sufficiency and stability. IMET is a relatively modest program, and only $47.2 million has been appropriated for FY 1992.[5] High and middle income countries, those with a per capita income over $2,349, receive no IMET funding. The IMET program is presently focused on the Andean countries, with Columbia providing 1,375 of the 6,400 IMET students who will study in the U.S. during FY 1992.[6]

A fourth element of our security assistance program is the use of Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) in foreign nations. MTTs may

be used to train host-nation military forces as part of the FMS or FMF programs. Alternatively they may be used to enhance a particular capability of the local forces or to assist in nation-building efforts. No separate line item in the national budget identifies the amount spent on MTTs as is the case with the FMS, FMF and IMET programs. Further complicating an evaluation of the program is the fact that MTTS are usually small scale, low profile operations. MTTs may consist of members from a single service or they can be Joint Operations. From April 1987 to January 1990, Special Operations Command forces conducted over 40 MTT deployments to more than 20 countries.[7]

While each of the methods used within the Security Assistance Program has its own objective, these programs are designed to accomplish general goals. The Bush administration has outlined five Security Assistance goals for the 1990s.[8] These objectives are:

1. To promote regional stability.
2. To aid U.S. friends to defend their security interests.
3. To maintain alliances.
4. To defend democratic values.
5. To support friendly economies as they modernize and liberalize.

CHAPTER III. THE CINC'S ROLE

To evaluate the utility of security assistance to a CINC, it is necessary to enunciate what a CINC is tasked to do. What is his mission? The National Military Strategy for the 1990s (Draft) provides the answer. Five broad national military objectives support American national interests and objectives, and a CINC is responsible for using the tools at his disposal to accomplish all five. The five objectives are:

- Deter or defeat aggression in concert with our allies.
- Ensure global access and influence.
- Promote regional stability and cooperation.
- Stem the flow of illegal drugs.
- Combat terrorism.

It is in the context of these five national military objectives that the utility of security assistance to a CINC must ultimately be measured. Is security assistance a useful tool for a CINC to use to accomplish these missions?

The Revision of the Unified Command Plan sets forth the role of a CINC in the United States Security Assistance Program. The CINCs are responsible for providing to the JCS military assessments of the security assistance programs within their assigned geographic area. The CINC then carries out advisory, planning and implementing responsibilities which relate to security assistance. The CINC is tasked with commanding,

supervising and supporting the security assistance organizations in matters that are not functions or responsibilities of the Chiefs of U.S. Diplomatic Missions. And lastly the CINC must ensure the coordination of regional security assistance matters with affected Chiefs of U.S. Diplomatic Missions.

The CINC has five broad military objectives which he is tasked with accomplishing within his area of responsibility. The Revision to the Unified Command Plan sets forth the role of the CINC within the security assistance program. Armed with a knowledge of his tasks and an understanding of how he fits into the program, a CINC can then examine the capabilities and limitations of security assistance as it relates to the accomplishment of his mission.

CHAPTER IV. SECURITY ASSISTANCE CAPABILITIES

Faced with a smaller force to command, and fewer forces deployed overseas, how can a CINC use security assistance to fulfill his mission? Security assistance can aid a CINC in the accomplishment of his mission in four specific ways. The first is to use the program to make a country self-sufficient militarily, and thus less likely to need U.S. military support. Second, should U.S. forces need to be employed, security assistance promotes interoperability, the integration of local forces with the United States military. Third, the stockpiling of prepositioned equipment and supplies for use by host nation and U.S. forces simplifies lift and logistic requirements. And fourth, security assistance aids in assuring host nation transit or basing access rights.

The most straightforward way that the security assistance program may be useful to a CINC in the 1990s is that the program may actually negate the need for the overseas projection of American military forces. Simply put, we arm the locals so they can handle their security needs without U.S. forces. This strategy is a new version of the Nixon Doctrine. During the 1970s the U.S. stepped back from acting directly with its own military forces in the Third World. Indirect methods were used to achieve American security goals. Regional security issues were addressed by the forces of friendly states, which were generously armed and supplied by the U.S.[9] Iran, Indonesia and Zaire are countries

who fulfilled this role in the 1970s. Egypt, Saudi Arabia or Nigeria may be models for the future.

American security assistance can aid in providing security to our allies by serving to deter military action by aggressive regimes. Weapons transferred to friendly states provide them the military capability to make aggression appear costly or risky to adventurous neighbors. These allies are more likely to be able to handle military threats without American assistance. The existence of an active, overt military assistance program also demonstrates military cooperation with America. Such a program is a clear symbol of American resolve to be involved in the security affairs of the local nation. The American security assistance program in Kuwait during the 1980s was relatively small and inconspicuous. Had there existed a well publicized, large scale American security assistance program in Kuwait in 1990, as there was in Saudi Arabia, Saddam Hussein may not have miscalculated the depth of American commitment to Kuwait's security.

The second capability security assistance provides a CINC is interoperability. Should deterrence fail and the need arise for American forces to be deployed, security assistance makes it easier to integrate U.S. forces operating alongside the local military. The importance of interoperability was clearly demonstrated during Operation Desert Shield. During the rapid deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia, U.S. forces were able to rapidly achieve operational status. Bases, ports and airfields, built with U.S. assistance to American specifications

greatly simplify the planning and logistical aspects of a deployment. Common weapon and support systems greatly simplify supply demands; in many cases the initial demand for spare parts and other maintenance needs can be drawn from local stocks. Interoperable communication systems help to assure the adequacy of common command and control measures, a necessity for success on the combined arms battlefield of the 1990s.

Interoperability involves more than just common hardware and weapons. Other force multipliers are an important factor. Through a security assistance program U.S. and host nation forces develop a long term working relationship. The IMET program is an obvious factor in this arena, as is the regular employment of MTTs. Common doctrine and tactics are coordinated. Standard operating procedures and battlefield control measures are adapted to local conditions. A mutual awareness is gained of each military's capabilities and limitations. Armed with this knowledge a CINC is able to make informed decisions about the level of U.S. involvement required, as well as how best to employ local forces in a combined effort against an aggressor.

The third way that security assistance can aid a CINC is through the use of prepositioned equipment and supplies. Prepositioning supplies for use by host nation and American forces cuts down on the amount of lift required if U.S. troops are deployed. The fact that the material supports the common weapons systems of both American and host nation military forces is a selling point for nations which might not otherwise agree to

American requests for prepositioning rights. While prepositioning is at present a relatively minor portion of the security assistance program, its importance will grow as U.S. forces redeploy to CONUS and shrinking strategic lift assets are taxed to support contingency operations. Prepositioning of large or heavy end items, such as ammunition or POL, would be particularly useful. The FY 1991 Foreign Operations Continuing Resolution authorizes DOD to stockpile $300 million worth of defense equipment in Israel.[10] Smaller amounts previously had been authorized for similar programs in Korea and Thailand.[11]

The fourth way security assistance can aid a CINC in the accomplishment of his mission is by helping to provide basing access and transit rights. This access is a vital component of the American Security Strategy of the next decade. As stated by Secretary of Defense Cheney, "Foreign bases enhance deterrence, contribute to regional stability and facilitate rapid response by U.S. forces in meeting threats."[12] These bases are often built or maintained by Americans to our specifications and for our needs. The IMET program helps to assure access to these bases. IMET graduates frequently rise to positions of influence in their armed forces or government. In 1990 more than 1,000 former IMET students were serving as heads of state, cabinet ministers, ambassadors, chiefs of service, senior military commanders, academy superintendents, attaches or CEOs of leading enterprises in their country.[13] As a result of their training and exposure to Americans it is asserted that these officials are more

supportive of U.S. access requests", U.S. influence is enhanced among key regional decision-makers through years of experience in dealings with U.S. armed force and political-military officials."[14]

Administration officials insist that security assistance is not provided as "rent" for U.S. bases overseas. They do admit that "aid levels are usually a primary focus of base rights negotiations."[15] An examination of FMF grant levels reflects this fact. Five of the top six FMF recipients -- Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Portugal, and the Philippines -- host installations or control transit rights which are key to America's continued global access. With the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Clark AFB and Subic Bay, Manila can anticipate receiving fewer American security assistance dollars in the future.

The Security Assistance Program appears to offer a CINC several valuable ways to assist him in accomplishing his mission. Local allies can develop their own capabilities with our assistance and may be able to deter aggressive regimes or handle small-scale threats themselves. Interoperability is enhanced, should U.S. forces need to be deployed. Prepositioning of equipment can cut down on the lift requirements if deployment is necessary. Security assistance dollars and the IMET program help to ensure that overseas bases and transit right assurances will allow U.S. forces the means to deploy to fulfill their global security obligations.

CHAPTER V. SECURITY ASSISTANCE LIMITATIONS.

The security assistance program would seem to offer a CINC a valuable means of dealing with the security problems of the 1990s. Unfortunately, a number of institutional and systemic shortcomings may limit the usefulness of the program. A CINC has little control over the operation of security assistance programs within his geographic area of responsibility. Security assistance dollars often are not allocated to the nations who need them the most - other factors play major roles in funding allocation. Conflicting goals of the program further complicate the picture. Once weapons and training are dispensed the U.S. has no guarantee that the recipient nation will use them in a manner beneficial to U.S. security needs.

Despite the Unified Command Plan's tasking that CINCs are responsible for advising, planning and implementing security assistance programs, in practice a CINC has limited influence over the program in the countries of his area of responsibility. Program control is shared among a variety of civilian and military organizations, each of which may possess conflicting aims or agendas.

The State Department plays a major role in the security assistance process. The overall supervision and major policy and program decisions are the domain of the State Department. Decisions regarding the direction security assistance will take, its priorities, and even whether there will be a security

assistance program for a given country are under the authority of the Secretary of State. Congress plays a major role in the security assistance arena. Congress, by withholding funding, has the capability to disapprove a proposed transfer of military equipment or arms to another country. Earmarking of funds guarantees that only the countries deemed in need by Congress will receive funding. Administration requests,which reflect the CINC's input, are rarely approved intact by Congress. While overall aid levels may be similar it is the Congress which has the final say on how much and what type of military assistance aid a country will receive.

The Secretary of Defense has responsibility for the management, operation and administration of the security assistance program. DOD procures and delivers the equipment and integrates it into the recipient country's armed forces. Even within the DOD the CINC plays a relatively minor role within the security assistance process. The DOD organizations responsible for program implementation are the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) and the Military Departments.[16] The Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force, not the CINC, acquire the material included in individual country programs. They develop and implement the equipment packages tailored to meet the particular needs of a foreign military. In-country a military officer heads the Security Assistance Organization (SAO) which provides the interface with the foreign nation's military. Although he is a military officer, the head of the SAO is

directly responsible to the Ambassador, not to the military CINC of the region. The individual military services, the DSAA and the SAO are the major security assistance players within DOD. The CINC and his staff play an important role, but this role is one of coordination rather than actual formulation or implementation of the program.

A second limitation which impacts on the utility of the security assistance program is the fact that program dollars often are not allocated to the countries that need them the most. Security assistance funding is subject to many influences, and the military need to combat a security threat is but one of these influences. While Congress is debating program funding, a variety of influences are brought to bear on what was originally a question of security and military needs. These influences can include lobbyists from foreign nations, domestic ethnic groups and U.S. corporations applying pressure to keep American plants and factories in production. These pressures are responsible for Congressional earmarking of security assistance funds. For FY 1992, 87% of FMF funding has been earmarked by Congress.[17] Earmarking eliminates the flexibility to shift funds to respond to the security realities of a volatile world. Due to Congressional earmarking no FMF money was available to rebuild the Panamanian Defense Forces following the 1990 U.S. invasion. During the mid 1980s, earmarks provided billions of dollars of FMF funds to Egypt and Israel. Morocco and Guatemala, both engaged in combating active counter insurgencies, each received

less than 1% of the FMF total allocation.[18]

The role of security assistance as "rent" for bases and access rights has been previously discussed. Whatever the American position may be, foreign governments view security assistance funds as rent. The fact that five of the top six security assistance recipients host important American installations support this argument. Israel is the missing member of the top six. Other non-security issues support the large outlay of American security assistance funds to Tel Aviv.

Inconsistency in allocation and implementation of the American Security Assistance Program is an additional limitation of the programs utility to a CINC. The Executive and Legislative Branches of the American Government use security assistance as a tool to advance their own international agendas. This leads to inconsistency in the formulation and implementation of the security assistance program. This inconsistency makes it extremely difficult to develop long term programs. It is also confusing to our allies and is one reason why these allies turn to other nations for their arms and training. A key precept of the Saudi Arabian arms procurement policy is not to become solely dependent upon the U.S. as a source of weapons. This precept was adopted as a result of difficulties the Administration has had in obtaining Congressional approval for past arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Domestic and Israeli concerns, rather than Saudi security needs, have become the criteria for program approval. Similarly differing security perspectives of new Presidents can lead to

inconsistency in the American security assistance program. Following the inauguration of President Reagan, American security assistance goals and means were dramatically expanded from what they had been under President Carter.

Security assistance is often used to reward or punish a nation whose polices are a concern to American decisionmakers. While this approach may appear attractive to the State Department in its efforts to influence world politics, it plays havoc with a CINC's staff tasked with assessing the military viability of a security assistance program. The defense needs of a nation become secondary in a program whose avowed focus is to address that nations security needs. The high levels of aid given to Egypt and Israel as part of the Camp David accords is one example. Similarly, the Reagan administration provided an assortment of military aid packages to Honduras and Guatemala in return for help in arming and supporting the Contras.[19] During FY 1991 the Senate prohibited IMET funding for Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Zaire and Malaysia due to "blatant abuse of human rights."[20] All military aid which was requested for Jordan during FY 1992 was cut by Congress -- presumably because of Jordan's support of Iraq during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Similarly Congress has denied aid to Pakistan until it can be certified that Islamabad does not possess a nuclear device.[21] Inconsistency in program implementation severely complicates a CINC's ability to implement a coherent, cohesive security assistance program.

A fourth limitation on the utility of security assistance to a CINC is that the goals of the program may conflict with each other. The goals of local self-sufficiency and interoperability with American forces will increasingly conflict in the Third World. The tools needed by Third World militaries to combat insurgencies are not the same highly sophisticated and technologically advanced weapons U.S. forces presently employ. Third World militaries need simple, low cost equipment capable of operating without a sophisticated logistical and maintenance infrastructure. As future technology grows even more sophisticated, American high tech weapons will become even less suitable for use by our Third World allies. But it is often these high-tech, expensive, maintenance intensive weapons which Third World military leaders often wish to purchase for reasons of national pride and prestige. Third World nations usually lack the numbers of technologically competent personnel needed to operate and maintain advanced weapon systems. By exporting high tech weapons to these nations we are actually constraining their economic development. Every mechanic or engineer supporting the military is one less available to aid in the development of the local economy. It is this economic growth which usually is the true measure of security in the Third World.

The final limitation a CINC must face is the possibility of a recipient nation using American training and technology in the manner we had not envisioned. Abrupt changes in government can turn a reliable, well-trained and heavily- armed ally into a

well-trained, heavily-armed threat to regional stability. Iran is the most obvious example of this phenomenon. Overnight, Tehran turned from being our Persian Gulf policeman and became a threat to regional stability and the world's oil supply. Once American arms are delivered, there is no guarantee they will only be used to repel aggression or in self-defense. Argentina used American assault amphibian vehicles to spearhead their invasion of the Falkland Islands.

Similarly IMET training does not guarantee the cooperation and support of American policies. Each local leader must always first answer the demands of his own nation. America's requests will be acted favorably upon only if they are in the best interest of the recipient nation. An IMET education provides foreign military leaders valuable skills as well as an insight into the workings of the American political and military systems. These insights can at times be used to pose threats to American security interests. Manuel Noriega and former Ethiopian leader Haile Mengistu were both IMET students.

Formidable limitations face any CINC considering the use of security assistance in his campaign plan. The CINC is a relatively minor player within the program. Security assistance funding is not always provided to those who have the most immediate military need. American policy is inconsistent and the goals of the program may at times be contradictory. Once security aid is delivered the U.S. has little control over how the aid is used. Today's armed ally can easily become tomorrow's enemy.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS

Security assistance is an inexpensive way to project American power. Total outlays for the program average about $20 per American. But is it a useful tool from the perspective of a CINC? Does it help a CINC address the security challenges of the next decade? To find the answer, it is useful once again to address America's National Military Objectives of the 1990s.

Our first military objective is to "deter or defeat aggression in concert with our allies." FMS and FMF sales and MTT and IMET training obviously help to achieve this objective. Security assistance promotes self-sufficiency and inter-operability. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the countries most in need will receive the necessary assistance. Congressional earmarks, domestic pressure and inconsistency in program implementation all serve to diffuse the program's intended focus. Once delivered, there is no assurance that the aid will be used in a purely defensive manner.

The second American military objective is to "ensure global access and influence." IMET is a major influence in this arena. FMF money is a key factor. Semantics aside, security assistance money is rent for overseas bases and installations. This money does not guarantee base access. Foreign governments are vulnerable to nationalist charges that they surrender sovereignty by allowing the U.S. access to their territory. In the future if it is in the national interest of the local nation, we will be

granted access. If it is not, we will not be. No amount of security assistance aid will change this fact.

Promoting regional stability and cooperation is the third national military objective. Security assistance is important because it does promote self-sufficiency and deters adventurous neighbors. Security assistance can also serve as the impetus for local arms races. The need to maintain high-tech weapons conflicts with the needs of local developing economies. Backed by the U.S. and supplied with weapons, local powers can become unwilling to compromise and cooperate with other regional powers in dealing with a local crisis. Once delivered, arms and training are used to achieve local military objectives -- which can often conflict with the American agenda for the region.

The last two American military objectives of the 1990s are to stem the flow of drugs and to combat terrorism. The employment of MTTs may be useful in the counter-terrorist role. IMET and MTT training are useful in a counter-narcotics mission, present levels of operations reflect this fact. However, providing weapons, and especially sophisticated weapons, is not the answer. A focus on a military solution can lead to short term gains but it ignores the underlaying social, political and economic problems which continue to fuel the flow of narcotics into the United States.

Security assistance is one means a CINC can use to accomplish his mission. It is a variable to be considered when addressing the proper response to a security threat.

Unfortunately it is a variable over which a CINC has little influence. Transferring DoD security assistance responsibilities from DSAA and the individual services to the CINC, as well as the curtailment of Congressional earmarking would give a CINC additional influence. Entrenched bureaucracies and politics ensure that neither will occur. While a CINC can attempt to maximize the benefits of security assistance, domestic American constituencies and foreign military leaders control program allocation and employment, not the CINC. No guarantees come with the program, no security problems are solved by the independent application of security assistance. Security assistance can often breed a host of new threats which a CINC must address. Security assistance is a volatile and unpredictable means of projecting military influence and power. No CINC should bet his stars upon security assistance.

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